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Moral perfection

1. *“Love your enemies. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for those who persecute you. If you love only those who love you, what merit will you have? Do not the publicans do it? If you greet only your siblings, what are you doing more than others? Do not the pagans do this way? So be you as perfect as God.”* (Matthew 5:44 and 46-48.)

2. With these words Jesus teaches we must try to be as morally perfect as God is. But what does moral perfection mean? Jesus answers by saying we should love even our enemies, do good to them who hate us, and pray for those who persecute us. So, he explains that perfection essence is charity, as it implies the practice of all virtues. Vices stem from selfishness and pride, which are the opposite of charity. Excessive self-prioritization weakens charity elements: benevolence, forgiveness, abnegation and devotion. The more one's love can extend over their enemies, the more perfect

it is. Therefore the love reach indicates the spiritual perfection level. After having taught the charity rules to his disciples, Jesus guides them to try being as perfect as God.

The good people

3. Good people comply with the law of love that rules the universe. They use to ask themselves wheter they have violated charity, practiced any evil, disregarded any opportunity to be useful and been motive of someone's complaint. Scrutinizing their own conscience, they ask themselves wheter they have done all the good *they could do*, and wheter they have done to others everything they want others doing to them.

They believe in the goodness, justice and wisdom of God. They know nothing happens without divine permission. So, they are submissive to the Almighty's will.

Good people believe in the future life, reason why they prioritize spiritual wealth rather than temporary material interest. They know that life tribulation, pain and disappointment are trials or atonement and accept them without complaint.

They disinterestedly help others, repay evil with good, defend the weak against the strong and sacrifice personal interest in favor of justice.

Good people find satisfaction in the benefit they spread. They rejoice with the assistance they render, the happiness they promote, the tears they dry and the consolation they provide. Their first impulse is thinking of others' need rather than theirs. The selfish, on the contrary, calculate loss and profit before doing any generous action.

Being prejudice-free, good people are kind *to everyone* because they understand all humans are siblings. Respecting the others' opinion, they never rebuke those who think differently.

Charity always guides them. They neither hurt a neighbor through evil words nor injure susceptibility. They reject ideas which may cause a suffering or even a little annoyance to a fellow creature. They are aware that one who, although being able to avoid evil doing, deceives or harms someone, even slightly, neglects the love law and attracts atonement to himself.

They discard hate, rancor and revenge. As Jesus teaches, they forgive debtors as much as they would like being forgiven. They remember only the benefit they have received. Like Christ, who recommends the sinless to throw the first stone, they are indulgent with others.

They dislike pointing at others' faults. When duty obliges them to do it, they also

evinced the blameworthy's virtue in order to soften their mistake.

Good people study their own imperfection. They work unceasingly to overcome their moral flaws, so that they may say they are today better than yesterday.

They are humble and never decrease worth of others. On the contrary, they highlight their neighbor's virtue.

They are not conceited about their riches and personal advantage because they know everything they have been given may be taken away.

They use but never abuse the wealth they have been granted because they know money is a divine loan for which they will have to be accountable. They know the worst employment of riches is selfish passion satisfaction.

When occupying a leading position, they treat subordinates with kindness because they understand that before the Almighty all humans are siblings. They use authority to raise up dignity of underling coworkers and to increase morale of team members. They never humiliate a subordinate, who, by their turn, understands their duty and strive to fulfill it. (See chapter 17, item 9.)

Finally, good people respect the rights of their fellow beings in the same extent they want others respecting theirs.

These are not all the virtues which

distinguish the good people. Notwithstanding, one who tries to acquire them follows the road which leads to all the others.

The good Spiritist

4. The Spiritist philosophy does not create any morals. It just furthers understanding and practice of Jesus' teachings. Provided they have been well understood and, above all, deeply felt, the Spiritist lessons foster the development of an unshakable reason-based faith. The true Christian and the true Spiritist become thus one and the same.

There are people who interest in mediumistic manifestation but despise the Spiritist moral teaching. Others understand its principles but do not practice them. Why? Is the Spiritist philosophy obscure or mysterious? No! This is why even the simplest people, endowed with just ordinary intellect, can grasp its essence with remarkable accuracy. Perception of Spiritist *physical* phenomena requires just attentive eyes and ears. But doctrine *essence* acquisition demands a certain sensitivity degree that can be called *moral maturity*. This quality is related to individual spiritual evolution and independes of education and age.

Material priority is still too high for many people. They still cling to earthly things. A mist prevents them from seeing the infinite

future. As they refuse concepts different from those which they believe, their old trends prevail. They may even accept existence of spirit as a fact, but such step modifies little their instinctive tendencies. They perceive doctrine just as a small light ray, insufficient to motivate them to self-improve. Phenomena touch them more than morality, which seems commonplace and boring to them. They demand from the spirits more knowledge, without trying to be worthy of it. These ones are the imperfect Spiritists. Some of them keep stopped halfway. Others retreat in front of self-reform need. Anyway, their acceptance of Spiritist philosophy fundamentals means a first step. From it they will advance again in the future.

The true Spiritist is one whose heart *is powered by love and reason*, which provide them unshakable faith. *They can be recognized by their moral improvement and by their endeavor to master bad instinct*. Fake Spiritists get satisfied with limited horizons. They can only hear noise. True Spiritists understand a better reality exists ahead and strive to go farther. They can appreciate the whole symphony.

The sower parable

5. *Jesus went out house and sat by the lake. Great crowd gathered around him. Then*

he went into a boat and sat. The multitude stood on shore. He taught them many things in parables, saying:

“A sower went forth to sow. While he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side. Birds came and ate them up. Some seeds fell on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The seeds sprang up but the sun came and withered them because they lacked root. Other seeds fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Others fell on good ground and produced crop, a hundred, sixty or thirtyfold what was sown. Those who have ears, let them hear.” (Matthew 13:1-9.)

“Hear the sower parable. The seeds that fell by the way side mean those who hear the word and do not understand it. Thus the wicked ones come and catch away the seeds from their hearts. The seeds which fell on the stony place are like they who hear the word and at once welcome it with joy. But it lasts short because they lack root. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word they quickly fall away. The seeds sown on thorns mean those who hear the word but become fruitless, because the worldly care and wealth lure choke the word. The seeds which fell on good ground are like they who hear the word, understand it and yield crop, a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.” (Matthew 13:18-23.)

6. This teaching depicts different receptions the Gospel may receive. Indeed, there are fruitless people whose hearts are as barren as a boulder. In the parable analogy we find Spiritists too. Some of them are attracted to the material phenomenon. From it, which they see just as a curiosity object, they learn little regarding morals. Others seek mediumistic communication only to satisfy a whim. After hearing the moral guidance they continue being as indifferent as before. There are those who appreciate the good advice, but only for application to others. However, there are also the true Christians, who produce good fruits, like the seeds that fell on fertile soil.

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE SPIRITS

Duty

7. We often come across duty, which is our obligation before ourselves first and then before others. Here we will discuss only moral duty, and not professional duty.

It is hard to fulfill moral duty because it uses to oppose our secret interest. Duty victory has no witness. Its failure undergoes no repression. So, duty accomplishment is left to our free will. Conscience warns us. However, it is frequently impotent against selfishness and

pride. This is why duty fulfillment raises us.
How can we define duty? When does it start and finish? *Duty begins and ends when its fulfillment deficiency and excess, respectively, do to others what we refuse that others do to us.*

We are allowed neither doing evil nor alleging ignorance of its consequences. Duty is the summary of moral obligations. It means bravery in the battle front. It is austere and mild. It is flexible in front of love and severe before temptation. *Duty-fulfilling people love their fellow beings more than themselves.* Duty comes from conscience, which is protected by the very duty accomplishment.

Although incapable of preventing evils of life, duty fulfillment strengthens and develops the soul. Thus we should love duty. It grows and shines in the superior worlds. Our obligation before God never ceases. Duty must reflect the resplendent virtue of the Universe Ruler, who wants perfection everywhere. - *Lazarus.* (Paris, 1863.)

Virtue

8. Virtue combines all moral qualities which make a worthy person. Virtuous people are good, charitable, laborious, simple and modest. Nevertheless, these attributes are often accompanied by some moral flaw. Those who brag their own moral excellence, for example,

are not virtuous because they lack humility. Actual virtue is discreet. It hides itself and flees from applause. We must pay much attention in order to notice it. Saint Vincent de Paul was virtuous. The priest of Ars was also virtuous, as were many other divine workers, unknown on the Earth but close friends of God. Often ignoring their own worth, they just follow their saintly inspiration and practice good with disinterest and self-forgetfulness.

We invite you to practice virtue, my children. We suggest you to commit yourselves to this Christian and Spiritist effort. Remove from your hearts pride, vanity and selfishness. They tarnish even the purest intention.

Whoever practices good feels a sincere satisfaction. But this joy decays into mere selfishness when one intentionally displays generosity in order to be admired. Never imitate they who proclaim themselves as being a goodness model, who trumpet their own moral superiority. Boastful virtue frequently hides corruption. People who build statues to tribute their own moral distinction cancel, by this very act, the merit they might have acquired. So, what could we say about the hypocritical ones, who pretend fake virtue?...

Spiritists! You know you are very far from perfection. Beware pride and egoism. We desire a lot of virtue for you. But little virtue with modesty worths more than much virtue

with pride. Due to pride humans have been losing themselves. Through humility they will reach redemption. *François-Nicolas-Madeleine*. (Paris, 1863.)

Responsibility of power. Superior-subordinate relationship

9. As much as wealth, power, either formal or informal, is a divine temporary delegation. All those who receive it will have to render severe account of its use. It is neither a manipulation tool nor a right. God proves this by constantly moving power from one to another. If it was a right it would be inalienable. We only possess what nobody can remove from us. If a resource, whatever it is, can be taken away from us regardless our will, then such resource does not belong to us. God momentarily entrusts us power as *mission* or trial. We get deprived of might whenever the Almighty sees fit.

All people who are entrusted power, no matter its extent or nature, must remember they have souls in their charge. The powerful will have to account for every misuse of might. They will also be charged for all the wrong that, due to their *noxious influence*, their subordinates or followers practice. The greater the might, the heavier the responsibility. Bad example, manipulation, harassment and other abuses

committed by the powerful generate serious consequences which will revert to them. In the same way, the good fruits which stem from the beneficial action of wise leaders will also return to them. Everyone on Earth has a mission. Small or great, whatever form they might have, all missions are entrusted for good. Corruption of purpose means task failure.

God will ask the rich: “What have you done with the wealth that, in your hands, should have been a fruitfulness source?” In the same way, the Supreme Majesty will ask the powerful: “How much good have you done with the might I entrusted you? How much evil have you prevented? I allowed you to be strong on Earth. You were supposed to spread progress. How much advance have you promoted? I made you a master over your siblings. I entrusted you subordinates and followers for you to further their moral and intellectual development. They were neither slaves nor puppets of yours. They were not instruments for your whim, greed, pride or selfishness.”

Superiors who keep Christian teachings respect their subordinates and understand there is no social distinction before God. The roles we play during our earthly lives change. A today boss may become a subordinate in the future and vice versa. So, superiors must treat an underling one in the same way they would appreciate being treated.

Subordinates have sacred duties too. Even when the boss fails to fulfill their obligation, the subordinates must keep doing their best to accomplish theirs because a mistake never fixes another. Nobody is allowed to repay evil with evil. Subordinates who suffer at workplace might have abused the authority they perhaps were given in the past. If they are impossible to escape from a hard situation, then they should accept it without complaint because atonement and submission trials are required for our spiritual advancement. They may be undergoing the hardship they imposed on others during a previous incarnation.

If subordinates follow the Christian teachings, they must keep proceeding with their employers with the same righteousness they would expect from them. They know each negligence in the agreed responsibilities means a loss to their client. So they earnestly fulfill their obligations. In short, good subordinates follow their duty sense. They are aware that any deviation from the correct pathway creates a debt which they, sooner or later, will have to repay. *François-Nicolas-Madeleine*, cardinal *Morlot*. (Paris, 1863.)

Voluntary insulation from society

10. Let pity drive the souls of those who beg divine assistance. Purify your hearts. Do not

allow worldly problems steal your peace. Lift up your spirits towards God, so that you may water the divine seed inside yourselves, which needs germinating to produce good fruits!

Routine prayer habit is very different from hermitism. You should dwell with other people in the same manner they live. You have to live with fellow beings of diverse natures and opposing features. Avoid conflict with them. Be serene and happy. Let your serenity come from your clear conscience. Let your happiness be like that of someone who counts the days to inherit Heaven.

Virtue needs neither looking gloomy nor repelling pleasures life permits. Just refer your acts to the Celestial Majesty, and try sacrificing your wants and whims in favor of those who suffer more than you. Before beginning a work, ask God for guidance. When finishing the task, thank the Almighty for the help you have received. Always think of God, so that your acts may be purified.

Perfection, as Christ teaches, means the practice of unlimited charity, whose duties include all social positions. One who lives in isolation lacks the best means to exercise charity. Only through frequent contact with other fellow creatures, only through the coexistence struggle, we can be really charitable. Those who self-isolate dismiss the most powerful spiritual evolution tool. Having

to worry only of themselves, the hermit tends to live the existence of the selfish. (See chapter 5, item 26.)

Nobody needs to self-cover with ash to receive advice and strength from the good spirits. You are dismissed from self-torturing in order to be under the God's loving eyes. Just live according to the human need in a balanced and honored way and try being happy. Take heed that your happiness neither harms other creatures nor disappoints those who love you or trust you. Remember that God is love. Therefore love your fellow beings and the Supreme Power will bless you. *A protective spirit*. (Bordeaux, 1863.)

Take care of body and spirit

11. Does moral perfection require intentional body maltreatment? Not at all! In order to allow the soul to live, move and have some liberty illusion, the body must be healthy. So, we must take care of both body and spirit because one influences the other. However, they have very different aptitudes and needs. This apparent incompatibility complicates us to reach and maintain the proper balance.

Let us look at two opposing approaches. The ascetics advocate body annihilation. The materialists demean the spirit. Both are mistaken. Alongside these two extremes there

are many indifferent people, who are careless about both body and soul. Then, where is the wisdom? Love your soul and also look after your matter, which is an instrument of your spirit. We must take care of both flesh and spirit because they are interdependent. One who disregards the body limit, which is imposed by Nature, despises the God's laws. Never punish your flesh because your free will has failed. Your body is as guilty as the badly-driven vehicle is responsible for an accident it causes. How useful is the self-whipping of a religious one that remains proud, selfish and uncharitable? Spiritual perfection can only be achieved through moral enhancement. So, discipline your spirit. Master it and humiliate it. This is the correct way to get closer to God. This is the only pathway which leads toward perfection. *George*, a protective spirit. (Paris, 1863.)